

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY	USSR	REPORT	
SUBJECT	Transfer of the Frontier Troops of the MVD to the MGB	DATE DISTR.	28 February 1955
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This is UNEVALUATED Information

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 (FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

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1. In ethnic composition, the Frontier Troops of the MVD consisted of Great Russians, Belorussians, and Ukrainians, and sometimes Kazakhs and Kalmyks. The troops were selected on the basis of reliable personal backgrounds, with no trace of political dissidence in their immediate families. Minority personnel were never assigned to posts within their own native union republics. Instead, they were posted to other areas.
2. Soviet Army troops were never used as border guards in any areas, except in such leased territories as Porkkala and Port Arthur. Only trained MVD troops, schooled in border patrol techniques, were used on the Soviet periphery.
3. The Frontier Troops were transferred from the then MVD to the MGB in 1948 or 1949.¹ This transfer resulted largely from the personal influence of Abakumov, who wanted both the Frontier Troops and the militiya under his control. Abakumov's motive in this UNCODED fold: first, it was a plain case of empire-building, to enhance Abakumov's own stature and boost his prestige in the eyes of Stalin; and second, the border control function was undoubtedly a legitimate function of State Security, designed to protect the USSR against its enemies both at home and abroad. The integration of the border control function into the MGB resulted in an unquestionable increase in the efficiency of the entire counter-subversion program of the USSR.
4. No publicity accompanied the transfer of the Frontier Troops to the MGB. However, there were some rumors that such a transfer would take place. For example, in

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late 1948 or early 1949, [] the present chairman of the KGB, at the Dynamo Stadium, Moscow, Serov []

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[] indicated that he, [] UNCODED, and Kruglov were peeved as a result of the cut in Beriya's authority brought about by the transfer of the Frontier Troops to the MGB []

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5. The MGB always looked on the MVD as "parasites with nothing at all to do--uneducated, crude, dull types". There was a general long-time rivalry between the two security organizations. Following is one of a series of incidents which culminated in the Government's transferring the Frontier Troops to the MGB: In early 1948, []

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[], a fight broke out between officers of the two services at mealtime in the dining hall of the combined MGB/MVD residential building just off Karl Marx Street. [] several pistol shots were fired. However, no one was hurt, as the bullets landed in the ceiling of the dining hall.

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Comment: []

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[] the transfer of the Frontier Troops from the MVD to the MGB took place at a later date, probably in early 1950.

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